[A]. Describe the past year’s accomplishments and the current status of this Action Project.

Describe concrete achievements: meetings, data gathered and analyzed, plans made or implemented, changes in processes, and measured results. If you haven’t made much progress, explain why you think things are moving slower than planned.

The Experiential Ed/Co-Op Team has defined the current state of experiential education at MCC and completed some analysis of the current situation, including:
- Identified credit, non-credit, workforce development, and continuing education/corporate services as four areas of “curriculum” focus for the project
- Defined terms related to experiential education, curriculum, co-op, etc.
- Produced an inventory of credit courses with co-op, internship, externship, and practicum experiences
- Begun to inventory non-credit experiential opportunities and external relationships and sources for experiential ed
- Preliminary discussion of an improvement theory, i.e. a need for alignment of co-op and experiential ed opportunities across all divisions and departments
- Discussed the need for a “clearinghouse” to match students (credit, non-credit, workforce development, and continuing ed) with opportunities
- Researched and acquired institutional membership in Michigan Council for Internships and Cooperative Education.

Review (12-19-07):
The main work of the past year on this project focused on building a taxonomy of experiential learning, and attending to the current state of such learning at MCC. There was also some preliminary work done on improvement theories [AQIP category (8) Planning Continuous Improvement.]. Besides AQIP category (1) Helping Students Learn, which is the main category for this action project, the team worked across a range of departments on experiential learning at MCC, and this work aligns well with AQIP category (9) Building Collaborative Relationships. Fact-finding, study and research have marked this phase of the action project, which is one of the ten AQIP principles of high performance organizations.

[B]. Describe how the institution involved people in work on this Action Project.

AQIP wants information about motivation and communication: how you kept this Project on the institution’s priority list, how you maintained general awareness of the importance and progress of the Project, and how you kept those working on it directly active and motivated.

The Experiential Education/Co-Op Team has engaged the college community in a number of important ways, including:
• Survey of all faculty (both part-time and full-time) to describe current experiential activities in all college courses
• Engaged both the credit and non-credit areas of the college in investigating and researching the topic; 2 sponsors represent the academic and non-credit areas
• Developed a rich body of web-based resources on the team’s work processes, including meeting minutes, agendas, resources from other institutions, etc. on the central AQIP website; demonstrations of these web-based resources to internal college groups including supervisors, managers, etc.

Review (12-19-07):
As noted in the review for Section A, collaboration appears to be a key feature of this action project. Especially commendable in this regard is the team’s efforts to engage the credit and non-credit sides of MCC in this study and fact-gathering stage of the project. The team’s efforts to communicate its findings and share resources in common with the entire campus are also commendable and align well with AQIP category (5) Leading and Communicating.

[C]. Describe your planned next steps for this Action Project.

Be specific about the next critical steps you are planning to move the Action Project ahead. If your planning is vague or there is no planning at this point, explain why.

All MCC Action Projects periodically rate their progress along the seven CQI steps. The Experiential Education/Co-Op Team is currently at Step 3, Analyze Current Situation. Upcoming planned steps include:
• Development of a shared “lexicon” or “Glossary” of experiential education/co-op related terminology based upon current MCC practices and existing information from professional organizations, etc.
• Begin to form an improvement theory (Step 4)

Review (12-19-07):
Using the seven CQI steps to track the progress of work on this action project is useful and commendable. The Experiential Education/Co-Op Team reports that it is now at step three of the seven steps, “Analyze Current Situation.” It would be helpful to know where this step three is in relation to the plan to monitor this project’s progress that MCC put forward at the start of this action project. Among other things that initial plan called for setting a timeline for the project, presumably with set milestones for completing key elements of the project. Perhaps the team could set up a crosswalk between the seven CQI steps and the timeline and events set forth in the beginning of this action project.

[D]. Describe any “effective practice(s)” that resulted from your work on this Action Project.

Share practices (or processes, policies, procedures, or initiatives) that could be adopted or adapted at other institutions. AQIP is most interested in practices that would give value (better educational services, cost-savings, improved morale, more satisfied
stakeholders, etc.) to another institution if they copied your innovation. If you believe that your work on this Project has little or no value for other institutions, explain why.

While the Experiential Education/Co-Op Team is still working in the early analysis phase, the following effective practice may be of use to other institutions • Designed and deployed a survey to identify experiential opportunities, generic enough to be useful to other institutions; a copy of the survey and results is archived on the Team’s section of the MCC AQIP web page.

Review (12-19-07):
The AQIP community of institutions is grateful to have access to the survey MCC created that identifies experiential opportunities. Sharing such resources in common with other educators is another example of how your work aligns with AQIP category (9) Building Collaborative Relations.

[E]. What challenges, if any, are you still facing in regards to this Action Project?

This is an opportunity to get constructive, actionable feedback and advice from our review process. Use this question to specify where your blocks, gaps, sticking points, or problems are. If you have already fashioned strategies to deal with any challenge you face, share both the challenge and your strategy for meeting it.

The Experiential Education/Co-Op Team needs more regular involvement and attendance by leaders. In addition, future challenges include:
• Expand discussion beyond service learning
• Finish Step 2 with a body of defined experiences as a “baseline”
• Keep in touch with Sponsors to define “boundaries” of any proposed coordination/clearinghouse for experiential ed and co-op
• Retirement of one team leader
• Two team members elevated to team leader status
• The Team must work to maintain a standing schedule of meetings, tasks, and deadlines with attendance by all team members

Review (12-19-07):
The challenges faced by the Experiential Education/Co-Op Team as it proceeds include securing regular team-leader participation, engaging more discussants on experiential learning, organizing and deploying the information it has gathered, sustaining relations with Sponsors, and changes in team membership. The team is well positioned to meet these challenges successfully given its successes to date. Based on this action project update, the Experiential Education/Co-Op Team seems adroit in building solid, collaborative relations and making people feel valued. Such skills will prove valuable in dealing with the challenges before the team.